

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for determining whether a network is connected to the Internet, comprising:

5 configuring a first computer in the network to periodically generate a heartbeat message to a second computer outside the network; and

10 configuring the second computer to determine whether the heartbeat message is being received, the receipt of which is indicative that the network is connected to the Internet.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the computer outside the network is a primary master domain name server.

15 3. The method of Claim 1 wherein the heartbeat message is authenticated.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the second computer establishing a maximum frequency at which the first computer may send a heartbeat message.

20 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising the first computer changing the frequency of generating the heartbeat.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising the first computer notifying the second computer when the frequency of generating the heartbeat is decreased.

25 7. The method of claim 1 further comprising defining the number of consecutive heartbeats which are not received to constitute a disconnection.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising validating the resource records.